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HELLENISM AND CHRISTIANITY

FRANK BYRON JEVONS

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

The long period of helpless infancy through which the human being who is to survive in the struggle for existence must pass is proof conclusive that from the time when first men were men—and from an even earlier time—they must have lived together in groups. Whether those groups were, as in the case of the gorilla, patriarchal in kind, or matriarchal, as they are seen to be, or may be conjectured to have been, in the case of some tribes very low in the social scale, is still a disputed question. The tendency of those groups, however, was in the patriarchal direction; this tendency strengthens even in times when the tribe is still migratory, and is fully established by the time when the tribe settles down in a fixed habitation as a village-community. From the village-community the city-state develops; an amalgamation of city-states may produce a national state; a national state may become a world-power, and even seek to establish itself as a world-empire.

In each and every one of the forms, just enumerated, through which human society goes, the human beings that constitute it are conscious of the fact that they do belong to it and that strangers do not. As belonging to it, they have purposes and interests in common. Their consciousness of those purposes and interests is a common consciousness or collective consciousness. As common or collective, it is neither confined to, dependent on, nor created by, any single member of the community. It is there when each man is born into it; and there it continues, though any one member be removed by death from the community. It directs and even determines, within limits, the thoughts, the beliefs, and the actions of those born into the community. It is the Custom of the community. It prescribes what each member of

the community may or may not do. It even determines what he shall think and believe. This common or collective consciousness has its own psychology, its own psychological laws, which are distinguishable and ought to be distinguished from those of the ordinary psychology which are gained from study of the individual considered in abstraction from society.

Among the conceptions found in the common consciousness and ever evolving in accordance with the laws of its psychology the most interesting are those of morality and god. Primitive man regards everything which happens to him, or within the range of his observation, as the act of some agent. That is the theory of Animism, established by Professor E. B. Tylor and accepted by all competent to judge. To primitive man the category of cause and effect is unknown, as Wilhelm Wundt has shown in his *Völkerpsychologie*: it is by the concept of act and agent alone that primitive man seeks to explain things. Very naturally, indeed necessarily, in the case of many things the assumed agent cannot be found: he exists but is unknown. His act is a fact, patent to the common consciousness; and he is a power, as is apparent to all; and, if unknown, then he is an Unknown Power. The community collectively is conscious of his existence and his power. To him are ascribed any other acts, i.e. facts, in the case of which the community can find no visible, tangible agent. A relation exists between him and the community affected by his acts. That relation is a bond, a *religio* according to one etymology of that word. And the bond exists in the collective consciousness of the community. It not only exists but it persists. It may persist so long that the unknown power, necessarily conceived as an agent, and so far resembling man, acquires a proper name; and then many more doings are related of him than those which originally attracted the common consciousness to the fact of his existence—he becomes the central figure of myths, an All Father such as is found in Australia, Melanesia, America, Africa.¹

But many of the facts or acts for which primitive man seeks an author are ascribed by him, on what he considers good evidence, to some visible, tangible, material, or animal object. And

¹See A. Lang, *The Making of Religion*; R. Hoffmann, *La notion de l'Être Suprême chez les peuples non-civilisés*.

such an object, or rather the power which manifests itself therein, will take its place in the common consciousness of the community as the power to which the offerings of the tribe may be made and its requests preferred. In either case, whether the power does or does not manifest itself in material form, the community, as a community, has a god. But whereas acts may be ascribed to various animals or material objects, and a plurality of such deities may accordingly arise, if an unknown agent is credited with any one act, any number of further acts may be credited to his account—a multiplication of deities is not necessary. In Australia and other places a multiplication seems not to have occurred. Elsewhere it undoubtedly did.

The god or gods of a nomadic tribe, when the tribe settles down into a fixed habitation, become the deities of the village-community; and, if it grows, of the city-state, and even of a nation. The community of worshippers, even in the last case, remains, if not in fact, then by convention and fiction, a body of men of common race and origin worshipping the god or gods of their fathers and forming a political as well as a religious community. And, if one nation by force of arms establishes its authority over others, it may weld them into one political whole, an empire, as Rome did. A new political community is created; but will a corresponding religious communion be developed? The question admits of no general answer; but what actually happened in the case of the Roman Empire and the Christian religion is coming to be better understood, and is accessible to the general reader in such a work as Doctor Paul Wendland's *Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur in ihren Beziehungen zu Judentum und Christentum* (1907), from which this article will borrow largely.

Looking backwards on the chain of historical occurrences, we may be inclined, with the wisdom which is born after the events, to regard that which happened as that which alone could happen in the circumstances, as the necessary effect of the causes at work. But increasing knowledge, and the power which it brings to us of placing ourselves by the use of the historic imagination at the scene and the time of the events, is apt to weaken that impression. We can realize the conditions which prevailed and under which the event took place. But in doing so we also realize that there

were other contingencies which were also, and equally, favored by the conditions.

The Jews of the *diaspora* were widely scattered over the Hellenistic world; wherever they settled their monotheism attracted proselytes from amongst the best type of men; why should they not have converted the world to Judaism? Rome's conquests brought as one of their consequences the irruption of Mithraism into its army and amongst its citizens; its expansive force might well, as Cumont's investigations show,² have spread it over the whole of the ancient world; yet its spread was arrested. Above all, in the time of the Empire, the worship of the genius of the Emperor, as it was the symbol of the unity of the Empire, had at its back not only the whole force of the government but also the whole-minded approval of the governed: what could stay its progress?

These were among the contingencies. What were the conditions under which or on which these and other tendencies had to work? First we may notice one, without which no form whatever of religion could have become common to the whole of the ancient world. It is a very simple condition in appearance. It is merely that that world formed one community, a whole. And what unified it into one whole was not the fact that one and the same political government was imposed upon it, for its unification began before the Roman Empire. That process of unification, so far from being a result produced by the Roman Empire, paved the way for the accomplishment of what, according to Ihering, was Rome's task in the history of the world, that is, the revelation of the idea of a world-empire as superseding the principle of nationality; of a universal religion as superseding all national religions; of one legal system, that of Roman law, as superseding all others. That process of unification is what is known as Hellenism—the process by which Greek culture was brought within the grasp of the non-Greek world, and by which that world was Hellenized. Like the hand of the dyer, a new idea—and still more a new system of ideas, such as that offered by Greek culture to the non-Greek world—must be subdued to what it works in.

²Franz Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*. Paris, 1907.

To be received by the ordinary mind it must be lowered to the level of the ordinary mind; or rather perhaps we must say that the ordinary mind grasps as much as it can and in such way as it can—it can only understand a thing by, at least partially, misunderstanding it. The Hellenizing of the ancient world began before Rome's day, with Alexander's attempt—and failure—to establish a world-wide monarchy. Though the attempt failed politically, it did however lay the ancient world open to the "pacific penetration" of Hellenism: the Greek language (or rather the *Koinê*) and Greek modes of thought poured in, and fertilized the area they inundated. Hellenism endowed the ancient world with one culture, not provincial but a *Weltkultur*, inspired with Greek thought and expressed in the Greek tongue.

To say however that the ancient world owed its unification to Hellenism is scarcely adequate. Hellenism made it a new-created world. The possession by the world of a common tongue, the *Koinê*, awoke the world to the consciousness of its common humanity. The Greek distinction of the peoples of the world into "Greeks and barbarians" could not survive in the atmosphere of Hellenism. The only distinction which Eratosthenes could recognize between man and man was not that of Greek and barbarian but that of "good and bad." If Hellenism thus levelled old distinctions, if Hellenistic culture had a levelling tendency, at any rate the distinctions it abolished were distinctions that offended and resisted the growth of our consciousness of our common humanity. In this connection it is no accident and no matter of insignificance that the conception of the *οἰκουμένη* now for the first time appears, transcending differences of race and nation, and furnishing the complement to the conception of a common humanity.

Not only, at the bidding of Hellenism, does this new-created world arise, but in Stoicism we see it in process of becoming conscious of itself. The true state, in the Stoic view, is the *Cosmos*; its citizens are all men, ruled by one divine law; it has no temples or images, the work of man's hands, unworthy of gods; in it there is no marrying or giving in marriage; neither is there any money. Cosmopolitanism, humanity, the brotherhood of man prevail therein. Social distinctions disappear: the woman is

as the man, slaves and masters are unknown, there is neither bond nor free.

The unification of the world of culture, which was the work of Hellenism, was a condition which rendered possible the spread of any form of religion—whether Judaism, Mithraism, or the cult of the Emperor's genius—which had within it power to propagate itself. But a second condition which we must notice—the growth of the individual's consciousness of his own existence as an individual—though compatible with Judaism and conducive to the growth of Mithraism, did not lend itself to the cult of the Emperor's genius; for that was demanded of a man not as being individual and thereby, to the very core of his being, distinct from all other men, but as being a citizen and, as such and in respect of this obligation, indistinguishable from any other citizen—without individuality.

In those forms of ancient society in which the religious community was co-extensive and identical with the political community, individual piety and personal religion had but little room in which to grow, and less encouragement to do so. Compliance with the outward forms was all that was required; and as no further direction was given to the individual, no further step by him was usually taken. But, even so, in some cases individual self-consciousness began to manifest itself; and it showed itself usually in an anxiety about the state of the individual after death. The rise of the Greek mysteries is the first manifestation symptomatic of the growth of the individual self-consciousness. That manifestation was spontaneous and from within. But the impact of external forces drove the movement further. The break-up of states and societies which the growth of the Roman Empire involved carried with it the disintegration, if not the dissolution, of the religious as well as the political communities which those states and societies formed. This process disengaged the individual and set him free. Being free, and being conscious to some extent of his freedom, he immediately set to work to weave new organizations, clubs, societies, social and artistic, which were neither limited by nor dependent on the ancient city-states.³

³T. P. Waitsing, *Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles chez les Romains*.

If he preferred a political life, all roads led to Rome; and there a career was thrown open to talent. In moral philosophy the claim and significance of individuality and personality was recognized. Ethics generally becomes individual. Epicurus sets forth personal happiness as the end of personal endeavor; and Stoics and Sceptics alike agree with him in seeking the realization of the ideal in the individual apart from society. The ideal wise man of the Stoics, self-centred in his individuality, was immovable by aught external. The personality of Epicurus came to be regarded as a divine epiphany, the revelation of a *σωτήρ* to the world. Biography now for the first time, and now naturally, makes its appearance in literature; portrait-painting in art; realism in the mimes of Herodas. The professions become differentiated; knowledge—even though research was neglected—was popularized and science “vulgarized.” In poetry, oratory, and history the personal note is unmistakable in Catullus, Horace, Cicero, and Tacitus. The moral corruption of society in Rome produced its reaction; and that reaction took the form of popularizing moral philosophy—that is of bringing it home to the heart of the individual, and putting to individual men the questions, Who art thou? for what intended? called to what? And this work was carried out by preaching in the markets and in the streets. It was mission-work carried on by the Stoics. And its interest for us is that the channels it created were to be filled with Christianity, which through them was to flow with what has hitherto appeared such unaccountable rapidity throughout the Roman Empire.

The Stoic missionary, Epictetus tells us, must have the conviction that he is sent by Zeus as his messenger to men. He must have no property, possessions, or home. If beaten or assaulted, he must love his assailant as his brother. Neither friend nor wife must stay him from obeying the call when it comes to him. This mission-work, it cannot be doubted, predisposed the hearts touched by it for Christianity. It was a *praeparatio evangelii*. It prepared the soil, especially by preaching the doctrine of personal responsibility for wrong-doing. It has left its effects even on the Epistles of the New Testament, as was first shown in detail by Heinrici's commentary on the Corinthians. If we would

have a picture of the Stoic street-preachers, we can reconstruct it from Acts 17, where Paul appears in Athens even as they did: every day he was in the market-place, addressing himself not only to the Jews and devout persons but to all whom he found there, and attracting to his audience even his rival street-preachers, the Stoics and Epicureans. Of such Stoic and Epicurean missionaries many were converted to Christianity; and what Augustine says of those of later times is true of those of the earliest period—the Church did not require them to change their habit or their mode of activity. Naturally too those who went over to Christianity took with them not only their bodily habit but also their intellectual outfit, and necessarily but unconsciously modified their Christianity to go with it. Later, Christianity not only recognized its debt, thus incurred, to heathen moral philosophy, but even exaggerated it: not merely did Tertullian recognize that Seneca was often Christian, but a forged correspondence between him and Paul was produced, and the hand-book of Epictetus was twice edited *in usum Christianorum*.

Thus, then, even before the Roman Empire arose, Hellenism had made the *οἰκουμένη* into one social, one moral and intellectual, community, and had prepared a field alike for Judaism, Mithraism, or the cult of the Emperor's genius. Next, not only was a community, co-extensive with the ancient world, created, but the individual rose to the surface of his own self-consciousness—a new condition in the state of things, and one which was not likely to lend itself to the development of the cult of the Emperor's genius, however much it might encourage the individual to exercise his personal freedom in choosing a religion for himself. Thirdly, we have seen the development of a system of personal appeal on the part of the Stoics, carried out by means of street-preaching—a mode of appealing to the individual which, though devised by pagans in the interests of moral reformation, afforded to Christianity a singularly effective method for its rapid propagation throughout the world.

Thus Hellenism had created a new community, imperfect indeed in its structure, because the unifying force of a common religion was as yet lacking to it, though the bonds of a common culture, intellectual and moral, at present held it together. Yet

the new society was composed, in a sense in which none other yet had been composed, of individuals; and it was for the individual to decide what, if any, form of religion—existing or yet to come—should be common to all members because it was the personal conviction of each individual. The political changes accompanying the growth of the Roman Empire, which had everywhere broken up the city-states, had disintegrated the worship of the city-gods, and even the faith of the ordinary citizen in them. The growth of science and philosophy had, even in pre-Hellenistic times, led the cultured to doubt and sometimes openly to deny the received polytheism; and in Hellenistic times it had even undermined the religion of the people. The human spirit, however, was not prepared to acquiesce in blank and empty negation. It moved first, in its search for something positive and real, in the direction of universalism. The polytheisms of different nations were to lend mutual support and testimony to each other by being shown to consist of the same gods under different names: the world was one community, having not indeed one God but the same plurality of gods everywhere for the object of its universal worship. The movement in this direction, which shows itself in the pages of Herodotus, and which availed itself of the prestige and fabulous antiquity of polytheistic Egypt, appeared to be forwarded in Hellenistic times by the fact that the cult of Egyptian, Phrygian, and Syrian deities propagated itself widely throughout the Hellenistic area. But the very success which it had was fatal to itself: the identification of one god with another, of each with all, and all with each, resulted in something which certainly was a non-polytheism, but which, as it evacuated every deity that was submitted to the process of all distinctive characteristics, yielded but a negative monotheism. One God there was in name; a god indeed of all peoples and nations; a god that could be found by theological speculation, but could not be found where he was wanted, unconsciously perhaps, by the individual seeker—in the individual's own heart.

Doubtless an obscure, though still real, sense of what there was wanting in the abstract and negative monotheism in which the tendency to universalism had resulted both gave rise and gave support to Euhemerism. The bond between god and man,

which in the village-community and the city-state had been felt to exist, and which the decay of polytheism, or rather of worship as it existed in the city-state, had disintegrated, Euhemerism, as a theology, sought to discern in the divine in man, which it saw in the great personalities that overtopped ordinary mortals. The roots of this belief may possibly be traced back to the Greek belief in a man's *daimon*, and to the Greek worship of Heroes. It is belief in the divine power manifesting itself in and through man; but, we may note, it is the outcome of a belief in divine power, not the source or origin of that belief. The first great personality in the Greek world thus recognized as divine was that of Alexander. His successors enjoyed like honor; then in Egypt Ptolemy I, after death, was thus consecrated; and the deification of Roman Emperors eventually and naturally followed. Logically enough, the person in whom the divine power was thus manifested was addressed—before the Christian era—as σωτήρ, *præsens deus*; and his manifestation was spoken of as ἐναργής ἐπιφάνεια. One of the lines on which Christianity was to run, or rather on which it did run, was thus prepared: the world was to some extent trained to the conception, or prepared for the idea, of a Divine Saviour, manifested here and now on earth. How impotent was that conception, taken by itself, is shown by the fate that attended it when it took form in the deification of the Roman Emperors. The spiritual need of the individual who was a member of the moral and intellectual community created by Hellenism was not for an abstract and negative monotheism, but for a personal God to whom he could have access in his own heart. Euhemerism set up a process which was based on the recognition of the divine in man, but which ended by bidding man find God, not in his own heart but in the person of a mortal individual like himself. The conception that such a mortal was a *præsens deus*, an ἐναργής ἐπιφάνεια, was not merely illusory, it was, or rather it proved, derisory. Nevertheless Roman statesmanship—and the statesmanship which could create and maintain the Roman Empire needs no other testimony than that capacity—sought to find in that conception both a visible and outward sign, and also the inward and invisible bond, of the unity of the Roman Empire. This idea was not the artificial product of political

expediency; and it was something more than a piece of Euhemeristic theology gone wrong. To understand it we must call to mind the fact that the stage of religious development reached by the early Italian tribes before they came under the influence of neighboring peoples was very low: their *di indigites* were in a rudimentary stage of development, their belief in the *genius* of each individual man was already deeply rooted. The history of their religion turns on the successive inundations of foreign worships which commercial and political relations with foreign nations brought in their train: by the side of the *di indigites*, the *di novensides*, the "newly settled gods," took their place; first Greek divinities, and then Oriental—Cybele, Bacchus, Mithras, Isis. Religious receptivity was the characteristic of Rome—religious receptivity, indeed, rather than religious activity. This Roman receptivity became in statesmen the tolerance which is religious indifference—a tolerance which, as statesmanship, insists on the importance of religious forms for political purposes, and combines with the observance of forms absolute indifference to the individual's belief or want of belief. Thus at Rome the form of worship was emptied of all content: a vacuum was created, abhorred by nature and to man abhorrent. The consciousness of sin, the desire for expiation, and the need of salvation, which favored, if they did not originate, the growth of Mysteries in Eleusis and elsewhere over the Hellenistic world, were found also in Rome, and the mysticism which springs up from such a soil has left its mark in the Sixth Book of Virgil's Aeneid. This feeling of the need of expiation was utilized, for political purposes, by Augustus. His rule was to be recognized as marking the rebirth and renewal of the human race. The expiation was indeed to be national, not individual, and to be marked by ritual elaboration. Horace was called on for a *carmen saeculare*. Temples and priesthoods were restored. Old institutions and old virtues were to be re-established. Virgil was called on to link the greatness of the present with the glories of the past in his Aeneid. And yet this attempt to set back the clock failed. Or rather it succeeded; for its real meaning and veiled intention was not to revert to republican times and a republican government, but to facilitate the transition from the Republic to the

Empire by representing the movement as a return to the ancient state of things. The motive throughout was not religious but political. The emperors regularly became *divi*, their *genius* an object of worship. From the dizzy mixture of all kinds of religion—native Italian, Greek, and Oriental—the worship of the Caesar rises, and overtops and overshadows them all. The old Italian belief in the *genius* was thus impressed into the service of political and imperial ends. Combining religious and patriotic sentiment, the worship of the Caesar appeared admirably adapted to unite the peoples, differing in nation and religion, who formed the Empire; to serve as the common expression of their adhesion to the Empire; as the outward and visible mark of the unity of the one and indivisible Empire. But the worship of the Caesar did not revivify the ancient religious beliefs. It placed them in the second rank, and sucked the life's blood out of them. And though it thus deprived them of what vitality was left to them, it gained itself no religious strength thereby. It was a purely external form and act, having no religious content, and affording no satisfaction to the religious instinct.

By the Roman Empire the *οἰκουμένη* was unified into a political whole. By the action of Hellenism it had been endowed with one culture, a *Weltkultur*. What was then still wanting to it was religion. But the demand for religion sprang from the cravings of the individual self-consciousness, the birth of which was a greater event in the history of the world than the rise of the Roman Empire or the growth of Hellenic culture. And the demand for individual, personal religion could not be satisfied by the Caesar-worship which was all that the religious indifference of Roman statesmen could produce to meet the need. Indifference however manifests its better side as tolerance; and the religious tolerance of Roman statesmanship, at any rate at first, allowed the individual to follow his religious instinct as he would. The Stoic propaganda, as we have seen, sought to direct personal piety into a moral rather than a religious channel. Accordingly the religious instinct, when it could not be appeased by mere morality, threw itself largely upon Oriental cults. Better means of communication, military roads, increasing commerce, above all the lengthy stay of the legions in the provinces and on the frontiers

and the steady infusion of the legions with *peregrini*, facilitated the spread of Mithraism, the favorite religion of the soldiers. A god thus worshipped was limited to no city-state and to no one nation: his worshippers formed a community capable of embracing all mankind, capable of producing a universal religion. And the tolerance of Roman statesmanship permitted Mithraism to spread as it would, and as it could.

Judaism also, like Mithraism, though by the action of different forces, had been spread broadcast over the Hellenistic world. But it was the Jews of the *diaspora* and not those in Palestine who alone became exposed to the action of Hellenistic culture. And the way in which Hellenism affected the *diaspora* is manifest and indisputable: not only did the Jews of the dispersion become Hellenized in speech, they absolutely could not understand their own scriptures, save in a Hellenistic version. To a certain extent, even, Greek thought permeated through the barrier of their national exclusiveness; but it was to a limited extent only. If Philo is a conspicuous, he is also a unique, surviving instance of the influence exerted by Greek philosophy on the Jews of the *diaspora*. And as the action of Hellenism on the Jews of the dispersion was small, so their reaction on it was, in effect, trifling. Proselytes who came to them they did accept. But the seed which is to grow in the soil in which it is set must burst in order to grow. Judaism however had become much too rigid for any such expansion; the "cake of custom" had dried and hardened round it till expansion was impossible. What gives later Judaism its peculiar hall-mark? "Is it not," says Bousset (*What is Religion?* p. 158), "is it not religious custom—circumcision, the maintenance of the Sabbath, the tithes, the avoidance of mixed marriages, the laws concerning food, directions for purification, and *not* sacrifice and worship in the temples? Throughout the world a Jew is recognized by these things."

If the Jews of the dispersion were rendered by their tribal exclusiveness incapable of absorbing more than the merest modicum of Hellenic culture, the Jews in Palestine were absolutely beyond the reach of its action. Points of resemblance, indeed, between the Judaic and the Hellenistic worlds there were. But they are resemblances inherited by both from an earlier stage of culture—

a stage which all the peoples of the earth enter, and from which some emerge. One such point of resemblance must here be noted: it is the belief in evil spirits, demonology—a belief found amongst the Jews as well as other people, a belief inherited by Christianity from the Jews. The behavior of such spirits is the same all the world over; everywhere they plague men, and much in the same way. Everywhere they are driven out by exorcists; and for this purpose the use of sacred names was not confined to the Jews and Christians, but was familiar to the heathen also (London Papyrus, ed. Kenyon, p. 67: ἐξορκίζω σε κατὰ τῶν ἀγίων ὀνομάτων). Even in the formulae used a resemblance naturally springs up: *φωμώθητι* is a word specially used in this connection. Sickness is hypostasized (*πνεῦμα ἀσθενείας*), not in the New Testament alone. And the further we depart from the oldest strata of Christian literature the more frequently do we meet with the marvellous. It is only in the more recent strata that Hellenistic influence manifests itself, whether in institutional matters or in mythical realism.

Primitive Christianity, originating as it did in Palestine, stands aloof from Hellenism, uninfluenced by Graeco-Roman culture. It did not seek at first to operate on or through literature. As Wendland says, it did not belong to the Paper Age: Peter, James, and John wrote nothing. The oldest letters are letters, not epistolary compositions. The *Koinê* used is rather the spoken than the literary *Koinê*. Luke first shows any signs of response to the demands of literature and style. The feeling still was that the pagan world with its science and philosophy belonged to the powers of darkness. "Let no man spoil you with philosophy" was the warning issued. It is intelligible therefore that the pagan world, for its part, saw at first in Christianity a barbaric doctrine, hostile to culture.

But if primitive Christianity, cut off from Graeco-Roman culture (or sheltered from it?) made no appeal at first to literati or philosophers, if it ignored or was ignorant of philosophy and literature, it was because its message was to the heart rather than to the mind, to the religious consciousness of the individual. Religion was revealed as based on and manifested in the individual's immediate experience of communion with God. The personal piety

which Stoicism labored by its mission-preachers to stimulate and maintain was to be enabled to find its God. But, though the individual was addressed, he was addressed not as such, but as being, or to be, a member of the Kingdom of God. Released from national restrictions, from the customs which had caked round the religion of the Jews, the Kingdom of God was to provide the community without which, or apart from which, the individual religious consciousness droops, if not withers. As the individual himself cannot exist, or even come into existence, apart from society; as he is born into a common consciousness, neither created by nor dependent on him alone; so the objective facts of his religious consciousness are not peculiar to his experience alone. It is only because they are universal that any individual can participate in them; that they are constituent of the objective and collective religious consciousness; and that the individuals participating in them form a religious communion.

The course of historical events is apt to appear to us, looking back at them, to have had but one order which it could follow. When however we immerse ourselves in the facts, there seldom appears to have been but one direction which they could take. For the spread of Christianity there were two routes, through Jewry or to the Gentiles. The Jews of the *diaspora* lived in strictly organized communities which maintained an active intercourse with the mother-country. What more natural, what more inevitable, than that Christianity should first seek outlet along those lines? Yet it was in those strict communities that Christianity was most bitterly opposed; and, had it succeeded in following those lines, it would have found its course blocked, for the reason that Judaism in effect purchased toleration from Rome at the price of renouncing proselytism. The road through Jewry to a world-mission was thus doubly blocked. Paul's choice was speedy: he turned with little loss of time to the Gentiles, and preached that in the Christian community there was neither Greek nor Jew, nor bond nor free, nor male nor female. The essential unity of the human race, the equality of all men before God, which is correlative to the Christian idea of the one God and was implicit in Jesus' gospel, was brought into the full light of consciousness by Paul. It was a truth which had already

become manifest on its moral side to the Stoics, who were even then teaching that in the true state there is neither bond nor free and the woman is as the man. But the Stoic apprehension of the truth was moral and intellectual. Religious it was not. The Stoic mission-preachers, like the missionary Paul, made their appeal to the individual. But it was an appeal to his moral not to his religious consciousness: "unum bonum est," says Seneca, Ep. 31. 3, "sibi fidere." "Turpe est etiam nunc deos fatigare . . . fac te ipse felicem." The appeal to the Hellenistic world found it also, as we have seen, in possession of the ideas of sin and weakness, of the need of salvation, of a σωτήρ, a saviour and intermediary. But Christianity gave those ideas another content. Asceticism and "other worldliness" were in existence in the Hellenistic world before the time of Christianity; "the simple life" was preached and practiced, as a change, in Seneca's day (Ep. 18. 7; 100. 6).

The representation of Paul's activity in Athens which is given in Acts 17 is of special significance. The account of his preaching in the Areopagus shows that he accepted from the Stoics their theory of man's natural knowledge of God and of man's natural morality. And the version evidently belongs to a period when there was no longer any question or any possibility of Christianity's relapsing into Judaism, no longer any doubt or hesitation as to its universal mission: the Church had always had that mission. How quickly this conviction grew up is shown both by the reception into the synoptists of the words, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations," "Preach the gospel to the whole creation," and by the consideration that the Fourth Gospel naturally springs from it. The greater importance gained by the Logos doctrine over the Messiah theology is explicable in the same way: Christianity was definitely turned toward the heathen—was consciously become a universal religion. As a universal religion, or in its attempt to establish itself as such, its relations both to the Jews and to Rome were essentially altered. Judaism was tolerated by Roman statesmanship precisely because it was a national religion and had renounced all attempt to become anything more. That toleration was enjoyed by Christianity so long as the Christians were supposed to be some obscure and

unintelligible sect of the Jews. When they emerged from that position, they became an object at once of hatred to the Jews and of suspicion to the imperial authorities: the Christians were persecuted by both. The Jews were hated by other peoples then—and the feeling is not extinct even now in Europe or America—and the Christians, regarded at first as a sect of the Jews, were regarded by the populace with the same antipathy. On the part of the authorities, the persecution of the Christians was inspired by no feeling of religious intolerance: sheer obstinacy alone could be invoked to account for the Christians' refusal to do what every other sect did—why could they not worship their supreme god under the name of Zeus, recognize their angels under the names of the other subordinate deities, and render formal respect to the genius of the Emperor? That the formal, official religion of the State, the established religion, could be attacked on religious grounds, was an idea which could not present itself to statesmen who, at least from the time of Augustus, in their personal indifference to religion, had seen in religion no potentiality but that of being one of the instruments which lay ready to the hand of the statesman to be used for political purposes. The danger of that mistake indeed lurks wherever an established religion exists. But if the statesmen of imperial Rome were at first unconscious of the fact that it was with a religious force they had now to deal, the Christians were not. The struggle evoked the self-consciousness of Christianity. The demand to render to the genius of the Caesar the worship which was God's was one to which the answer had been provided by Jesus. And the answer from the Church went up in a tumultuous explosion of fanaticism which to this day flames with extraordinary—and to the ordinary reader incomprehensible—brightness in the Apocalypse. Rome, drunk with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs, shall be consumed, and her smoke go up forever and ever. Never again did Christian fanaticism flame so fiercely against the Empire as it does in the Revelation of S. John the Divine; but, as Doctor Wendland says, it is not insignificant that that apocalypse was received into the canonical scriptures.

But if fanaticism, inflamed by persecution, shot forth in one direction with a fury which finds no justification in the spirit

of the marvellous words, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," on the other hand, first Paul (Romans 13) and after him the Church, made more politic use of the permission to render to the Caesar the things that were his. The friendly attitude to the authority of the State which manifests itself in Luke and in the Fourth Gospel is borne out by the prayers for the Emperor which were used early by the Christian communities and by the loyalty which was preached even in spite of persecution. But on this side, too, it was possible to misinterpret the words, and to abandon their spirit. The spirit of the words is the indifference to be felt by the Church Universal toward forms of political government: to none can it be limited, still less can it be identified with any. This fundamental truth was obscured from view by the issue of the struggle as to whether the Roman Empire should dominate Christianity, or Christianity the Empire. Christianity became, in the issue, the established religion of the Empire and an instrument of the political ambition of the Papacy. Its consciousness of its mission to become the universal religion was overpowered by desire for universal political power. So it did indeed gain the political strength which enabled it, when the time came, to fight Mohammedanism with Mohammedanism's own weapon, the sword. *Sed non tali auxilio*—it is not by such a weapon that a religion can win its way. The sword has broken in the hands of Mohammedanism: Islam has now no political unity. Its only hope thereof is a Holy War—a hope not yet banished to the limbo of political impossibilities. The political weapon broke in Christianity's hands also: the Reformation shattered it, though the Church of Rome still feebly stretches its hands after it—in vain. No national, no established church, no church which is the tool of political ambition, will or can be the Church Universal. It is from America that the majority of missionaries proceed; though let us not forget that Rome too works, and always has worked, unceasingly in the mission field. In that field at any rate the differences which divide Christendom diminish in importance; there the consciousness of our common Christianity is taken for what it is—the supreme fact. If it is now as impossible for all within the Church Universal to recognize the infallibility of the

Pope as it was for all within the Roman Empire to render worship to the genius of the Roman Emperor, the ultimate issue in the one case as in the other will justify the protest and the protestants.

Indifference to forms of political government is in effect the principle on which the evolution of a world-religion depends. But the lesson was, and is, one hard to learn. To postpone the realization of a Church Universal until a world-empire has established itself is to proclaim that the Church must, to realize its own proper end, subserve the ambitions and back the policy of some one political power—must render to Caesar, Kaiser, Czar, or Emperor the things that are God's. Christianity can live, and has lived and flourished, under any form of government. It even survives when it relapses into the form of a state-religion, or established church. But, in such a case, it also throws out fresh roots in the form of free churches. But Christianity is not to be confined within any bonds, not to be limited even to the free churches. It is the religion by which Jesus brings us all to Our Father. The religious consciousness is a common consciousness of objective facts, the reality of which is given in the individual consciousness, but given in that very act as of universal, and not merely subjective, validity and truth.

[The work of Professor Paul Wendland to which Professor Jevons refers (p. 171) is part of a Handbook to the New Testament which is being published by the firm of J. C. B. Mohr, in Tübingen, under the editorial supervision of Hans Lietzmann. In it the author, who possesses exceptional qualifications for the task, has described in comparatively small compass the civilization of the Greek and Roman world at the beginning of the Christian era, especially as it influenced the spread or development of Judaism and Christianity.

In a series of interesting chapters he discusses the changes which the establishment of a universal empire wrought in religious as well as in political conditions; the development, in theory and fact, of cosmopolitanism and individualism; the prevailing conceptions and ideals of culture; the missionary activity of philosophical schools, and the popular discourse (*diatribe*) as a

means of propagating their influence; religious development in the Hellenistic world and under Roman rule; the influence of contemporary culture on the Jews in Palestine and in Greek-speaking countries; the relations of early Christianity to Hellenism, especially on its religious side—attraction and repulsion; finally, on syncretism and gnosticism.

The extent to which the missionaries of moral philosophy prepared the way for the missionaries of Christian faith has not been generally recognized. The paragraphs on Paul are fresh and full of insight. The volume forms an admirable introduction to the study of the New Testament and of early Christian history. Its value is enhanced by the judicious treatment of the abundant and somewhat scattered literature on the subjects with which the volume deals.—Ed.]